



## Hamas: A Further Exploration of Jihadist Tactics

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### Introduction

This essay will explore Hamas literature and delve into its Bayanat (proclamations, leaflets, or broadsheets) and military-political objectives. First published during the 1987 Palestinian Intifadah (Uprising), the Bayanat are two-page leaflets that encouraged grassroots Palestinian activism, dictating events such as business strikes and the conduct of demonstrations. Hamas has published these broadsheets in four volumes in 1991. They are available in the Library of Congress and titled, "*Wathaiq Harakah Al-Muqawama Al-Islamiyah (Hamas): Min Wathaiq Al-Intfadah Al-Mubarakah*" (*Documents of the Islamic Resistance Movement "Hamas": Documents of the Blessed (Palestinian) Uprising*). This essay will touch on the first three years of Hamas *Bayanat*. The impact of Bayanat can still be seen today, when such tools are used along with the Internet, and Arab satellite television.

As U.S. forces and allies confront Islamic militant groups, it is important to study the mass of literature produced by such organizations as Hamas and Hizbullah. These books are available through the Library of Congress Middle East Collections and contain a treasure trove of information on tactics, ideology and their vision of the future. Analyzing Hamas leaflets give a clear picture of how the organization controls the tempo of riots and violence in Palestinian urban centers, a lesson that may be useful to the current American experience in Iraq.

Similar to how U.S. forces studied the guerrilla tactics of Mao and General Giap during the Vietnam War, we must now be students of the asymmetrical tactics of Al-Zarqawi (Iraq's Al-Tawhid and Jihad Group), Al-Zawahiri (Al-Qaeda), Mugneiah (Lebanon's Hizbullah), the late Sheikhs Azzam (Al-Qaeda), and Yassin (Hamas), as well as Bin Laden.

Military operations against such an adversary should take into account that Hamas, Al-Qaeda and Hizbullah observe and share each others tactics. These techniques must be assessed they not only to detect newly evolving terror tactics and urban warfare techniques but also an elaborate psychological and doctrinal campaign to draw fresh recruits to its cause. This essay will focus on analyzing the early leaflets of Hamas as a means of understanding the new method of urban jihadist confrontations now encountered by coalition forces in Iraq.

### What is Hamas?

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Hamas is an acronym for Al-Harakat Al-Muqawamah Al-Islamiyah (the Islamic Resistance Movement). The Islamist answer to solving the Palestinian question, Hamas advocates violent jihad until Israel is destroyed. All attempts at negotiation or a peace settlement are looked upon as a short-term truce and not a permanent peace. The organization began during the first Palestinian uprising, in December 1987. It evolved from a collection of Islamic fundamentalist and jihadist movements in Gaza, such as the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, and it absorbed the Palestinian jihadist movement, Al-Jihad (PIJ)[1]

Hamas' spiritual leader was the late Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, a cleric trained in Egypt's Al-Azhar Theological University in Cairo and an active member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Sheikh Yassin fused Arab nationalism and Islam in an attempt to control the 800,000 Palestinians living in Gaza. His organization became an Islamist alternative to the other Palestinian Marxist and nationalist organizations attempting to combat Israel. What distinguished Hamas was not only that it served as the Islamist alternative, but that it was unwilling to subordinate itself to the PLO and Yasser Arafat, which made them bitter rivals from 1988 to 1992.

Yassin was killed in 2004, when Israeli forces targeted his vehicle.

## The Organizational Structure of Hamas

An Arabic book entitled *A Study in the Political Ideology of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) 1987-1996* published by the Middle East Studies Center in Amman, Jordan in 1997 details the structure needed to support the general strikes and attacks during the first Intifadah. It describes the early structure from 1988 to 1989 as being divided into three sectors[2]:

- The Political Wing was responsible for issuing leaflets, statements, publication, and media analysis.
- The Security Wing was responsible for collecting intelligence information on Israeli forces and its agents to include collaborators.
- The Military Wing was designed to undertake pinpoint strikes and agitate the mob to violence. This group was initially called *Al-Mujahidoun Al-Filastinyoun* (the Palestinian Mujahideen). Another name for the military wing is *Munazzamat al-jihadiyyin al-Islamiyyin* (the Islamic Holy Warriors Organization)[3]. After June 1992, as more militant Palestinians joined Hamas this sector would evolve into the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Battalion.

The structure of Hamas is compartmentalized and decentralized; recruitment was by acquaintance and communications by personal messages[4].

## First Year of Hamas Leaflets (1988)

The Islamist leaflets published by Hamas first appeared several months after the first Intifadah began and focused on several themes. They encouraged martyrdom by reminding young Palestinians of the meaning of jihad, patience, and sacrifice. On a tactical level, these pamphlets directed the methods of violent protest, even how to counter Israeli tear gas. They evolved into a means of informing Palestinians in Gaza on strikes, taxation to support jihadist causes, and the gradual evolution of an underground government.

Over the years, they provided a means for the Palestinian street to respond to a settlement or debate between the PLO and the Israelis. It is clear that Arafat was reading these sheets just as avidly while in Tunisia as the Palestinians were on the streets of Gaza engaging the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). The significance of these pamphlets forced Arafat, in 1988, to view Hamas as a direct threat to his dominance over the Palestinian cause. This group was usurping his

monopoly on telling Palestinians in Gaza how to think and act, and it offered an intoxicant mix of Salafi-Wahabi Islam, along with the doctrines and techniques first utilized by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Hamas' ultimate success was that it offered a rationale for the uprising against Israel.

## Comprehending Hamas' Ideological Tactics

It takes a copious amount of reading to understand Hamas. Conveniently, the organization does not conceal its intentions or methodology for exercising control over the Palestinian population. Arabic sources abound from Hamas printing presses to sympathetic Jordanian printers who analyze the progress and tactics of the organization. One of the most pivotal resources is its four-volume compilation of leaflets distributed during the first *Intifadah*<sup>[5]</sup> from 1987 to 1991. Painstakingly analyzing the leaflets that were distributed throughout Gaza, one begins to understand the message, and in particular, the gradual radicalization of the Palestinian population.

During the first year of the uprising in 1987, Hamas calls for general strikes, demonstrations and a boycott of certain Israeli products. The group calls on Gazans to attend Friday prayers and adds an additional prayer for those martyred in the uprising. By the end of the year, Hamas encourages visitations for the family of martyrs, giving them alms, money, and gifts. This gradual escalation slowly produces a culture that values death over life and promotes suicide bombers, a trend that now reaches to women with children and even adolescents.

## Opening Months of 1988

The first Hamas leaflets described Israel as resorting to an iron fist, which was born of the initial Israel defense response that planned on a severe crackdown eliminating the uprising. These leaflets called for a general strike and used flowery words, referring to Palestine as the Land of *Israa and Miraa*<sup>[6]</sup>. Within less than three weeks, the leaflets began encouraging rock throwing and engaging Israeli security forces. By the end of January, Hamas slowly started to define itself and its early demands, including:

- Release of political prisoners from Israeli jails.
- Undermine Israeli intelligence services operating in Gaza.
- Refuse any negotiated settlement to include the Camp David Accords.

The early broadsheets proclaim that Hamas has its roots in the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood founded in 1949, and was a chapter of the much older original Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, which was founded in 1928. By February 1988, the broadsheets begin organizing for crude urban warfare and intimidation of Israeli forces. It calls on Gazans to:

“post watches on rooftops, and barricade themselves at home. It asks that Gazans arm themselves with rocks, knives and slings. On the rooftop they are to chant God is Great in unison.”<sup>[7]</sup>

Similar rooftop chanting was used to unnerve Iraqi troops by Kuwaitis during the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

In mid-February a broadsheet warned of false leaflets issued by the Palestinian Communist Party. A broadsheet dated February 23, 1988 states that “U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz arrives tomorrow; send a message to the American Zionist collaborators with protests and a general strike.” This is the first subtle threat for any Palestinian merchant not observing the strikes for Thursday and Friday.<sup>[8]</sup> Its publication demonstrates an understanding by Hamas that

American shuttle diplomacy can be disrupted by using strikes and violence during visits of American notables.

The March broadsheets named Palestinians as the descendants of *Khalid Bin Walid and Saladin*.<sup>[9]</sup> They recount how the 1936 Palestinian uprising frustrated the British and emphasize that no liberation or salvation is possible without Islam. Furthermore, these sheets called for a day of fasting and general strikes on March 12th and 13th for Al-Aqsa Day.<sup>[10]</sup> The March 28, 1988, leaflet contains ways to counter tear gas. It advises demonstrators to dump chlorine solution on the canister to stop it from emitting gas and place a rag soaked with vinegar solution on the nose to counter the effects of the irritant.<sup>[11]</sup> Whether or not this technique was successful, it shows how Hamas organizes and anticipates Israeli responses and prepares for urban hostilities.

April 1988 included the eve of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan and the entire month was organized with activities designed to galvanize the population. Leaflets declared Ramadan to be a month of jihad and patience, and then ordered the following in Ramadan:<sup>[12]</sup>

Day 1—Read the war verses from the Quran in Al-Tauba.

Day 2—Continue with Quranic immersion.

Day 3—Hamas will designate youths to collect alms for distribution to the families of martyrs, the poor, and those merchants economically devastated by the general strikes it calls.

Thursdays in Ramadan—Communal breaking of the fast in all Mosques in Gaza.

17 Ramadan—Observance of the Battle of Badr.<sup>[13]</sup>

Every Friday was also organized two weeks before Ramadan and during the fasting month, the sermons set the tone for street activity by focusing on topics such as:

- Ramadan the month of Jihad.
- Arab silence as Palestinians are oppressed.
- Conquest of Mecca.<sup>[14]</sup>
- Sermon over the Shaheed (martyr).

Broadsheets encouraged women to adopt conservative Islamic dress. Significantly, the Hamas leaflets between April and May 1988 begin to organize elements of Palestinian society. For instance, every Sunday during Ramadan is declared a day of solidarity with Palestinian prisoners. Other examples include the Hamas exemption for doctors and ambulances to move around freely during a general strike. Leaflets also ask Gazans to boycott all Israeli soft drinks and will punish any Palestinian importing such drinks into Gaza. Such a move will gradually extend to a boycott of all Israeli goods and an encouragement for Gazans to become self-sufficient. Hamas also creates elaborate activities during Eid-Al-Fitr, the three-day holiday that commemorates the end of Ramadan. On May 6, 1988, the leaflet asks all Gazans to:

- Perform the communal Eid prayer (required for all Muslims).
- Perform prayers over the martyrs (optional and usually encouraged if the remains can be prayed over). Hamas adds this extra prayer each time to pray over the martyrs. Including this prayer soon leads to an obsession with death and the concept of martyrdom, which would take a regressive turn when Hamas turns to suicide missions in the early nineties.
- This is coupled with encouraging Gazans to visit the families of those deceased and leaving them gifts, food and money.<sup>[15]</sup>

Hamas slowly creates a society that is ripe to adopt the suicide tactics of Hizbullah. These early manipulations of Islamic, Arab, and Palestinian commemorations focus on death, warfare, and conquest. Yet Hamas also takes the pulse of the Palestinian populace into consideration. For instance, the 18th Hamas leaflet released in May 1988 called for a cease in strikes and protest so children could take their end of year examinations.[16]

The May 1988 leaflets also show that Hamas will punish those who use the Intifadah to commit robbery and extortion, declaring that Islamic law will be applied to those they catch in such acts.[17] It is interesting to note that, in the absence of any Palestinian police or authority, Hamas becomes the de facto organization providing security for Gazans. Broadsheets also warn that widespread rock throwing on motorists will not be tolerated, except on days in which Hamas calls for violent protest.

## Israel Attempts to Institute an ID system

In the early summer of 1988, Israel attempted to institute an ID system to allow cleared Palestinians to easily enter Israel and expedite the process for laborers to reach their jobs. Hamas issued a broadsheet to counter Israeli plans, arguing that IDs:

- Keep Gazans occupied through bureaucracy;
- Are an attempt to break the Palestinian boycott on Israeli goods, as Israeli merchants line the area where the IDs are being made;
- Are an attempt by the Israelis to cause economic hardship on Palestinians;
- Help Israel divide the Palestinian community by issuing different classes of Identification Cards.[18]

Hamas activities for the month of June called for protests and general strikes to commemorate the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The focus of 1967 War commemorations were prayers for martyrs and the visitation of the families of martyrs and prisoners held in Israeli jails. In July 1988, the continued visitation of mosques, communal prayers and speeches coupled with visiting the families of martyrs, as well as prisoners and those clashing with Israeli forces in the hospital dominate.

The most significant leaflet was issued August 3rd and encouraged martyrdom on the first day of the new Islamic year.[19] This represented a new level of inciting youth to take more risks in confronting Israeli troops. The Hamas political ideology attempts to convince Gazans that Israel only understands the language of violence and does not truly believe in peace and negotiation. It also emphasizes that Palestine spans the distance from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. Interestingly, these pamphlets show an increased eloquence, "*Palestinian nationhood are not words said in political speeches, pamphlets printed, position taken, it is a long jihad, a sacrifice without end.*"[20]

Hamas begins the early process of galvanizing a segment of the Palestinian people to never accept peace, and only recognize PLO negotiations and settlements as temporary. Hamas leaders study Arab modern history, carefully selecting dates to energize resistance and acts of violence in Gaza.

## Winter Months of 1988

The ninth of each month was commemorated by officially observing another month of the Intifadah. For example, September's activities opened up with a general strike on the 9th. The following is a breakdown of the winter activities planned by Hamas, including direct attacks on Jewish settlers, Israeli forces or a general strike:[21]

- September 17th commemorates the massacre of Sabra and Shatilla that occurred during the Lebanese civil war in 1983. An Israeli court found General Ariel Sharon culpable for the massacre, standing by while Lebanese Christian militia killed thousands.
- September 29th observes the Battle of Khaybar. This is a battle that occurred between the Prophet Muhammad and the Jews of Medina. What began as a market dispute between a Muslim and a Jew erupted into full scale rioting. Why Muhammad and the Jewish leaders could not resolve their differences peacefully, and according to the Medinese Pact, remains a mystery. Islamic militants make a great deal out of Khaybar, and include it as an anti-Jewish chant.
- October 9th is the ninth month of the Intifadah.
- On October 14th, a strike is called to observe the Qubia Massacre of 1948.
- On November 2nd, the Balfour Declaration was issued. (Perhaps explain this)
- On November 19th, 1935 Izza-Din Al-Qassam, a Syrian insurrectionist who fought the French in Syria, lost and then took his fight against the British and Jewish Haganah in Palestine was killed. Hamas has named part of its organization after Qassam and in recent years has developed the Qassam rocket.
- November 9th is the 10th month of the Intifadah.
- November 29th marks the day that the partition of Palestine was approved by the United Nations.
- December 25th was the day that the Jihad Brigades were established in 1947 by Abdel-Kader Hussein. Their establishment was first observed by the Intifada in 1988.

These dates are not accidentally picked, but are cleverly designed to incite hatred of the Israelis, the United Nations and all those who advocate a negotiated settlement for the Palestinian question. By assessing the pamphlets of this period, it is clear that Hamas identifies itself as part of the global Muslim Brotherhood movement established in Palestine in 1949.[\[22\]](#)

Hamas explains that Palestinian land is *Waqf* property[\[23\]](#) an Islamic legal term meaning that this land is ceded to God in perpetuity for purposes of building mosques, farms and orphanages. This Islamic term of *Waqf* is debatable and much has been written among Islamic law scholars as to the status of the land when it is no longer used for theological purposes. Another concept of Islamic law that Hamas uses to encourage jihadist tendencies is that offensive jihad has become a collective obligation (*Fard Ain*) upon all Muslims. Hamas never mentions the other aspect of jihadic laws when it is (*Fard Kifayah*) one in which few Muslims people, organizations or states are participants.[\[24\]](#) This is an attempt to use theology to galvanize the entire society. Books of Islamic commentary on Jihad stretch back to the ninth century and are complex and contradictory, covering topics such as just war and breaking truces, among others. Hamas keeps jihadic rulings simple and never introduces writings that could dissuade the population from committing suicide missions.

By the end of 1988, the boycott of Israeli goods expanded beyond just soft drinks and foodstuffs to a large-scale boycott of all Israeli products. Pamphlets began to subtly threaten Palestinian merchants importing Israeli goods. Another interesting development at this time was the effort by Hamas to dissuade Palestinians from immigrating and a conspiracy theory arising in which the United States encourages Palestinian immigration to free up land for Jewish settlers. Hamas also attempted to address the issue of Israel closing schools in Gaza. The tactic of closing schools actually helps Hamas indoctrinate young Gazans by shifting the classroom to the mosques. These leaflets offer an understanding of how a civil affairs or psychological operations unit can address the dynamics of an Islamist group which stirs up hatred, resentment, and anarchy in the streets.

## Opening Months of 1989

In 1989, Hamas began a new campaign to further organize elements of Gazan society. In January, a series of leaflets requested the following:[25]

- Palestinian factory owners to employ Gazans.
- Palestinian landlords to reduce their rents.
- Palestinian industrialists to give alms.
- Palestinians living outside Gaza and the West Bank to provide remittances to those in Gaza.
- As a means of enforcing the boycott of Israeli goods, collective farming and the use of gardens to plant food was encouraged.

The most interesting leaflets distributed in February warn criminals in Gaza against extortion and burglary, condemning those who are taking advantage of the instability Hamas has created. Hamas begins to regulate Gazan society by imposing Islamic penalties on those caught taking advantage of Palestinians. It also encourages conservative Islamic dress on the streets as a sign of solidarity and piety. The next month, Hamas increased terror activities, resulting in Israeli deaths and injuries in Gaza and Qalkilia. Chants were used as a creative way of encouragement. The call to prayer was changed from *Hae Ala Al-Salah* and *Hae Ala Al-Falah* (Come to Prayers and Come to a Productive Work), to *Hae Ala Al-Jihad* and *Hae Al-Al-Itishhaad* (Come to Jihad and Come to Martyrdom). This is just one example that demonstrates why it is important to monitor the language used to incite violence from mosques and bullhorns.

Other tactics used to unnerve Israeli troops include mass *Takbeers* (the uttering of Allah Akbar and loud chanting) on the rooftops on April 12, 1989 to commemorate the claim of an attack of Muslim worshippers by a Jewish settler in the Al-Aqsa mosque. Other key dates in April of that year include:

- Conquest of Mecca by Prophet Muhammad.
- The death of Abdel-Kader Husseini and the 1936 Revolt.[26]
- Massacre at Deir Yassin (1948).[27]
- Battle of Ain Jalut in 1260 (in which the Mamlukes of Egypt stopped the Mongol Invasions in the Levant).[28]

It was during these commemorations that Hamas first issued a warning to Arab nations, "to cease interfering with the Islamist movement and its jihadi youth who act for the glory of the faith and the nation; allow them to fulfill their Islamic destiny in jihad and the liberation of Palestine." [29] During this time Hamas calls on doctors and medical providers (pharmacists) to give a five percent discount to all Gazans. Hamas also comments on Israeli elections rejecting both the Labor and Likud parties and not delineating between them.[30]

In April 1989, Hamas begins publishing its first leaflets publicizing the names and biographies of martyrs, slowly transforming these figures into cult heroes. It discusses how they died, their age, family, and education. Today, suicide bomber posters line Gaza much like one would find for rock stars or supermodels in Western cities.

## Ramadan 1989

The fasting month of Ramadan came in May 1989, and this represented the first time Hamas planned all activities for this month-long observance. It is useful to study how this Islamist organization divided the activities of the month as follows:[31]

- On the 1st day—all are to proceed to the Mosque for sermons and takbeer, after the sermons a prayer for martyrs will be undertaken.

- During the three-day, Eid Al-Fitr Holiday signifying the end of Ramadan is to be spent visiting the families of martyrs.
- May 9th—a general strike to observe the 18th month of Intifadah.
- May 15th—a general strike and urban violence to commemorate the independence of Israel.
- May 18th—a confrontation to protest closure of mosques and certain schools.

After Ramadan, there was a significant organization of the leaflets planning monthly activities into *Faaleeat* (action, meaning confrontations), *Idrabaat* (general strikes and closures of shops), and *siyaam* (fasting). June also marked a concerted effort to organize the upcoming pilgrimage to Mecca by giving the pilgrimage a theme of Palestinian resistance. By July, a new trend was started by Hamas, flaying the banned Palestinian flag with the new etching of “There is No God but Allah,” as a means of affirming the religious nature of the Palestinian question. Ramadan also saw a significant leaflet praising the Afghan triumph over the Soviets, which soon led to comparisons between the USSR and the United States as the next target of the worldwide Islamic militant movement.

## June 6, 1989

In an attempt to globalize their cause, Hamas issued a proclamation in its leaflets on the June 6th, 1989. Calling for unity and the globalization of Islamist organizations worldwide through the media, sermons and shared resources, Hamas exhorted every Muslim to be aware of the Palestinian issue. This proclamation also encouraged the dissemination of information about Palestinian martyrs as well as successful Hamas strikes against the IDF. Furthermore, it asks Islamist organizations to warn the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) not to neglect the Hamas founder, the late Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.[\[32\]](#)

## Winter 1989

Along with the usual commemorations, September had a more violent aspect in which Hamas incited Gazans to observe the Islamic New Year with an attack on IDF forces and Jewish settlers. A special strike was called on September 30th to protest all Arab nations who continue to find common ground with the United States in finding a peaceful solution to the Palestinian issue. On October 12th, Hamas calls on Gazan youth to burn Israeli crops during harvest time and they declare October 20th and 21st propaganda day—a day to write graffiti on walls, publish in magazines and publicize the Intifadah through the Arab media. The most significant leaflet is a Hamas proclamation encouraging all *ulama* (religious clergy) to discuss and raise the issue of Palestine in the mosques as well as raise the level of anti-Semitic rhetoric in sermons throughout the Arab world.[\[33\]](#)

## Hamas Leaflets Take on a Violent Tone in 1989-1990

In November 1989, a special leaflet was dedicated as a memorial to Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, a radical Palestinian cleric who founded *Maktab Al-Khadamat lil Mujahidden* (the Mujahideen Service Office) which became a clearinghouse in Pakistan for most Arabs fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. His organization was nicknamed *Al-Qaeda Al-Sulba* (the Firm Base), an organization inherited by his protégé Usama Bin Laden when Azzam was killed in a car bomb assassination. The pamphlet cites Azzam’s later booklet “*Hamas: Its Historical Legacy*.”

“The Israelis know I am Palestinian and fear I shall now redirect my fight from Afghanistan to Palestine and the *Bait Al-Muqadas* (reference to Al-Aqsa Mosque). God willing one can redirect those (experienced) fighters who have seen fierce battle in Kandahar, Jalalabad and other places in Afghanistan.”[\[34\]](#)

It is perhaps a foretelling of the globalization of Islamic militancy, which has among its core missions the destruction of Israel. December 20th, 1989 becomes Azzam Day.

Hamas also links Palestinian mafia groups and criminal gangs, labeling them Israeli collaborators and declaring war against them. This is designed to rid themselves of an armed group that could challenge them and, at the same time, endear Hamas to the local population as bringing order and justice to society.

In April 1990, the first reference is made in a Hamas leaflet ordering a specific violent act to be undertaken; this was to burn and attack Israeli vehicles in remembrance of Abdel-Kader Hussein. This is the first instance of targeted actions instead of just a general order to violently confront or ambush Israeli troops and settlers. These targeted violence leaflets called for burning vehicles or specific attacks on Israeli crops.<sup>[35]</sup> On the 27th of Ramadan (April 1990), Hamas urged all Palestinians to observe the Night of Power (the evening in which the first verses were revealed to Prophet Muhammad in Mecca) by making their way to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. This was a further attempt to Islamize society by provoking a confrontation at the Al-Aqsa Mosque and encouraging a mass mobilization to one of Islam's holiest sites.<sup>[36]</sup>

In late May, a leaflet was published encouraging a general strike to protest the Bush-Gorbachev Summit and bring the issue of Russian Jewish immigration to the headlines of the international and Arab media. This demonstrates an apparatus that closely follows and reacts to world events in the hopes of finding every opportunity to highlight the Palestinian issue.

## **Hamas Tactics Enhanced in 1992-1994**

The popularity of Hamas' leaflets helped establish this terrorist group. Significantly, these documents had the effect of notifying Israel that this was a terror organization with a great deal of domestic Palestinian support. As Hamas began to shift its tactics and radicalize further, Israel's responses were heightened accordingly. Ironically, one of Israel's responses to eliminate the threat of Hamas backfired and helped the group take its cause to a new level.

This shift is best illustrated by the tactic of car bombs and suicide missions. Hamas began using these tactics first on April 6, 1994. This tactical shift is directly tied to the deportation of 415 Islamic militants from Israel to Lebanon in 1992, where they were adopted by the Shiite militant group Hizbullah. This relationship introduced Hamas to two key elements in their war against Israel. First, Hamas deportees were given an introduction to Hizbullah's Shiite martyrdom tactics. Secondly, the Hamas ties to Iran were strengthened significantly.<sup>[37]</sup> The 1992 deportations also had the negative effect of bringing the PLO and Hamas closer together, which was shown by their first joint communiqué, issued to condemn the deportations. Previous to the issuance of this communiqué, it was correctly assumed that the PLO and Hamas were competitors for the soul of the Palestinian resistance movement.

## **Conclusion**

It is challenging to adequately discuss a group as complex as Hamas in a short article. The first piece, which ruminates on the early tactics of Hamas, should be explored in light of this article's discussion of Hamas literature. Hamas cleverly manipulated the Bayanat to advance their military and political objectives. Furthermore, these publications played a defining role in the Palestinian Intifadah and its transition from a non-violent uprising to one plagued by terrorism.

It is vital that American military strategists explore the Bayanat of today, whether they are leaflets pasted on Iraqi streets, disseminated over the Internet or played on Arab satellite television networks. These tools clearly empower terror organizations to exercise significant control over a

population and manipulate other's agendas to become their own. By tracing the tactics used, one can develop an understanding of these jihadists' and their vision of the future. It is only through a thorough comprehension of their strategic and tactical goals that we can hope to address the challenges that terror organizations have thrust upon today's world.

## About the Author

LCDR Aboul-Enein is a Medical Service Corps and Middle East Foreign Area Officer who currently serves as Director for North Africa and Egypt and Special Advisor on Islamic Militancy at the Office of the Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. He is a frequent contributor of reviews and essays on the Middle East and Islamic Militancy for military review.

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3. Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Violence, Vision and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 56.
4. *Ibid.*
5. [Intifadah](#) in Arabic means to shake off, and refers to the Palestinian uprising that began in December 1987 and lasted until 1992.
6. [Israa](#) and [Miraaj](#) refers to Prophet Muhammad's spiritual transmigratory journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to the heavens to receive God's prayer commandments. Islamic theologians debate whether his soul transmigrated, or if he was physically transported to the heavens where he supposedly met several monotheistic prophets (including Moses and Abraham).
7. *Wathaiq Harakah Al-Muqawama Al-Islamiyah "Hamas": Min Wathaiq Al-Intfiadah Al-Mubaraka/Documents of the Islamic Resistance Movement "Hamas": Documents of the Blessed (Palestinian) Uprising I* (Gaza, Palestine: Hamas Media Office, 1991), 33-34.

8. *Ibid.*, 35.

9. [Khalid Bin Walid](#) and [Saladin](#). Khalid Bin Walid (584-642 BC) was the military commander of the early Islamic conquests who defeated the Byzantine Empire capturing Syria and the Persian Empire capturing Iraq. Saladin was the Kurdish commander who captured Jerusalem from the Christian Crusaders in 1187.

10. [Al-Aqsa Day](#): It is difficult to ascertain what Al-Aqsa Day is; Hamas leaflets refer to it as the day of Israa and Miraaj defined above, while in other sheets it is in observance of August 21, 1969, when an Australian Christian militant attempted to burn down the Al-Aqsa mosque to usher in the Second Coming—although Hamas literature consistently claims the fire was started by Israelis.

11. *Hamas Leaflets I, Op. Cit.*, 48.

12. *Ibid.*, 52

13. [Battle of Badr](#): The first major battle in which Prophet Muhammad defeated a larger force of Meccans in 623 A.D. The Meccans wanted to extinguish Muhammad because of his monotheistic preaching and because Medina barred the Meccans access to the trade routes of Syria.

14. [Conquest of Mecca](#): Prophet Muhammad's final triumph over the Meccans occurred in 630 A.D.

15. *Hamas Leaflets I, Op. Cit.*, 52-56.

16. *Ibid.*, 56.

17. *Ibid.*, 66.

18. *Ibid.*, 67-69.

19. *Ibid.*, 86-90.

20. *Ibid.*, 94.

22. *Ibid.*, 98-102.

23. *Ibid.*, 143.

24. *Ibid.*, 148.

25. *Ibid.*, 151.

26. [Abdel-Kader Hussein](#) and the [1936 Revolt](#): Abdel-Kader Hussein was a Palestinian guerrilla leader who died in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The 1936 Revolt was a Palestinian revolt against British forces between 1936 and 1939, which led to the British publication of its 1939 White Paper. The revolt ultimately caused the British to leave Palestine as they were targets of both Jewish and Palestinian underground movements.

27. [Deir Yassin](#): A massacre perpetrated by the Irgun Movement against Palestinians during the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict.

28. [Battle of Ain Jalut](#): The battle in which the Mongols were stopped by the Egyptian Mameluke forces in the Levant in 1260 A.D. Jihadists today refer to the United States as Mongol invaders.

29. *Hamas Leaflets II*, 46-47.

30. *Ibid.*, 47-49.

31. *Ibid.*, 49-51.

32. *Ibid.*, 140-149.

33. *Ibid.*, 81-82

34. *Ibid.*, 163-164

35. *Hamas Leaflets III*, 39-40.

36. *Ibid.*, 38

37. Human Rights Watch, [Erased In A Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks Against Israeli Civilians](#) (Washington DC: Human Rights Watch, 2002).

38. [Ibid.](#), 65-67.